In the triple household
115 of A1, she plays the role of the guardian of the home, and she is al-
[145] ways seen occupied in some culinary or craft job. She reveals
157 little voluntarily, but when she decides to do it, her information is clear and precise. It is always to her that one has recourse to settle knotty cases, to complete a vocabulary of kinship, to respond to a systematic interrogation.

115 a3. --Vigorous girl of some twenty years, secondary wife of A1.
157 Her mother (a63), arîndesu of A1, akenôhosu of a2, is at present married to an asukosu of A1. Her father, dead, was a brother of the father of a4.

She is exuberant, always good-humored, ready to go with her husband on the hardest expeditions, capable of carrying heavy loads. She is a true "force of nature": physically, she is not without [42] charm, she is smiling and full of good health. As an informant she is vague, practically useless.

a4. --About 17 or 18 years of age, the youngest of the wives of A1. Her father and her mother (A67 and a68) are living, asoûnosu and a2 ônosu of A1, oyêmaesu and aseêtasu of a2. She is pretty, coquettish and provocative, does not give herself over to any appreciable activity, except on a trip when she becomes the active collaborator of her husband. She talks voluntarily, laughs a great deal, is very curious about our clothing, utensils, manner of eating and living. Totally inefficient as an informant.

a5. --Eight to 9 years. Daughter of A1 and a2. She has a very
[42] marked sub-nasal prognathism, and has, on the left cheek, a sort of small pimply hole, without doubt due to a tropical ulcer. She is a very calm and amiable child, sensitive to our advances, but who, when she is annoyed, shows sudden fits of anger or outbursts of somber humor during which she is unapproachable. The rest of the time she loves our company and collaborates willingly on the ethnographic work.

A6. --About 30 years: he is the son of an older vanished brother of A1; he calls his paternal uncle "father," the wife a2 of the latter, "mother," and the little a5 "sister." From a first marriage with the daughter of his father's sister (a14), now dead, he has two children (a8 and a9). He is at present remarried (to a7). Otherwise he is vain, satisfied with himself, not very intelligent, a very good father and very taken with his young wife with whom he is always found tenderly embraced. He is a verbose informant, but dull and without personality.

601 The Indians do not seem to perceive
602 the specific nature of certain inter-individual relationships except in
[123] the case of relationships of stepmother and stepfather, as will be seen farther on. Nevertheless, the very great liberty which reigns between a man and his wife on one hand, and his brothers-in-law on the other, contrasts greatly with the more serious and dull character of his dealings with his sisters or his (theoretical) wives. This reserve goes to the point of forbidding the verbal expression of the relationship of potential spouses among the children to a certain degree. In the
[124] course of our interrogations, we have always found it difficult to obtain an answer from the interested parties themselves or from their close relatives when the relationship was that of husband and wife (1).

1. The Indian questioned answers that he "does not know" or changes the subject of conversation.

However, there was no case where the exact answer was not given after several evasive words, or an affectation of ignorance, or an attitude of ill will. But however slight the prohibition (the exact information seems to be considered rather as an impropriety or an
[359] indelicacy), it is no less odd because of it, since children classed as potential spouses behave often, and very openly, as such, without anyone objecting to it.

595 Several times we have alluded to polygamy, concrete examples
462 of which were analyzed on the occasion of the study of the kinship systems. Among the Nambikwara, polygamy represents a general tendency limited by the quantity of available women, and a prerogative existing among the chiefs of the groups, the shamans, or outstanding personalities. From this point of view, it springs from the study of command, and we shall return to this when this problem is tackled. Whenever it exists, polygamy is not a substitute for monogamous marriage, it is added to it without suppressing it. An individual begins by marrying one single woman, and upon the occasion of his social advancement, or of happy occasions, it is suitable for him to add some companions. But a very clear distinction, even though it is not sanctioned by the vocabulary of kinship (2), is

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601 2. To characterize the functions of the first wife, an informant (A6) once used the term asiɛtu atɔperelisu (a1): to designate the supplementary wives, another informant (B1) mentioned a form nukɔnatere, which could be a feminine of nukɔnatɔre (b1), "companion," a term which the chief uses to designate the men of his group. But the

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sense of this term remains doubtful. And it has never been possible, in the course of the questions on kinship, to obtain from polygamous husbands discriminating terms for each of their wives.

595 462 [252 263] established between the first wife and the new arrivals. The first wife takes care of her children and devotes herself to the cares of the household, shredding the manioc and cooking the cumaru nuts. She is occupied with feminine craft tasks. In short, she carries on her activities within the [61] limits of the sexual division of labor. The other wives aid her occasionally, but their main duty seems to be to assist their husband in his masculine tasks. They are comrades and collaborators who, in the general plan of the division of labor, could be more justifiably classed with the men. Their aid seems like a method on the part of the chief of the group to fulfill his heavy duties more easily, and like a psychological compensation for his responsibilities. When he leaves on a hunting or reconnoitering expedition, one of his polygamous wives accompanies him to hold his arrows and to carry in her basket the eventual prize. When he works around the camp or in the village, it is with their aid and company. [515] Although men and women do not bathe at the same time, one sometimes sees the husband and his polygamous wives take a bath together, the pretext for great struggles in the water, and innumerable jokes. [832 524] In the evening he plays with them, either amorously, rolling in the sand embracing two, three or four, or in a childlike way. For example A1, a3 and a4, stretched out on their backs, by way of making a star with three points on the ground, raise their feet in the air and knock them against one another, bottom of foot against bottom of foot, in a regular rythm (this game is described by the term eridnaikitim, a1).

595 182 The polygamous union is thus presented as a super-imposition of a plural form of amorous companionship on the monogamous marriage, and at the same time, we insist, as an attribute of command with a functional value from the psychological point of view as well as from the economic. The women usually live on very good terms, and although the first wife has a role that might seem a little unappreciated, working while she hears at her side the bursts of laughter of her husband and of his little mistresses, and sometimes even witnesses more tender frolicking, she does not show either bitterness or jealousy. In fact, this distribution of roles is not either unchangeable or rigorous, and, upon occasion, although rarely, the

595 husband and his first wife will also play, while bathing or near the
182 camp fire. She is in no way excluded from the gay life. Moreover, her slighter participation in relationships of amorous comradeship is compensated by a greater respectability and a certain authority over her young companions. It must not be forgotten (and we have
595 pointed it out in the study of the kinship system) that the polygamous
382 marriage presents a double aspect--the marriage of a man with a woman and with some "daughters" of the latter, or with a woman and the "sisters" of the latter. The respective situations of A1, a2 and a3 and a4 realize the two situations at the same time since, at least in one of the cases (with a4), it is the second oblique marriage within the same line. As example of the first type, we have the marriages of A32 and of A56; for the second type, one can also refer to the marriage of C20 (1).

1. Cf. above, p. 53.

595 The polygamous wives then, as a general rule, belong to a
571 younger generation. The first wife calls them "daughters" or of "little sisters," and they behave as such. A form of spontaneous grouping which one finds realized frequently is the union of the husband's daughters (by his first wife) and his young wives (polygamous). They form a sort of gay and carefree childlike society, but also a more or less subordinate society. We have found households comprised of two (A42, A57, A73, B1, B32, C20), three (A1,) and five (A32) wives. It does not seem that the number of wives is proportional to the social importance of the husband (even though polygamous union itself is conditioned by this), but is rather haphazard.

SEX LIFE

000 We shall begin by giving some information concerning organic activities.

514 Coughing, sneezing, spitting, blowing the nose, belching, ex-
515 pelling flatus, constitute operations which are not subject to any
576 etiquette, and which the vocabulary does not always clearly distinguish (thus: tolitʃige, b1, to cough, and tolitʃiore, b2, to sneeze; kaite, sneeze, and kastʃe, c, spit, tarnikititu, a1, to expel flatus or defecate). All of these needs are satisfied publicly, without precaution, ritual gesture or formula, as much on the part of the executor as on that of the spectators. No attention is paid to them, and everything

[734] wife. We have already cited the case of the two little girls
913 a8 and a9 whose stepmother (a7) refuses to take care of them.
Their father (A6) must, then, assume many of the lesser func-
[842] tions. At the time of departure for a trip, it is he who prepares
the basket for the elder, measures on her the length of the tump
line, and shortens it thanks to the free end which he fastens
passing it several times through the holes of the basket-work.
869 It is also the father who tells the children the traditional stories.
538 And, with a view to shortening and making more intelligible
these often long and repetitious accounts, he applies himself
to transposing them in a style especially adapted for children.
Thus, the infant's version of the story of the Flood (1) is as

1. See below, p. 120, the complete version of this story.

follows:

15. ųãtemo dohonenãiram kãnaram hẽpatnẽ atãtene
ųeidenkiathattene ųafndẽnle. (b1)
Everyone was dead! There was no one left! Not a man!
Everyone was dead! Nothing more!

595 Relationships of a particular nature exist in the case of
571 polygamous marriage between the children of the first wife and
their young stepmothers. Even though the latter are called
"mother" or of "sister of the mother" by them, they live in a
state of companionship with them, especially with the girls,
which also extends to all the children of the group. We have
already dwelled on this society of girls and young wives who
take collective baths, go to defecate in a group, smoke to-
gether, joke and give themselves over to rather farfetched games,
such as spitting long jets of saliva in one another's face. An-
other example: a3 and a4 play with their stepdaughter a5. One
of them pushes her and throws her to the ground with such
violence that her head cracks against the ground and the little
one begins to shriek. The two young women heap mockeries
upon her. Finally, the youngest goes to drag her from the
ground almost by force and pushes her toward her mother, with-
out ceremony, like a package. These relationships are close,
appreciated, but without courtesy, like those which young boys
might have in our society. They rarely imply service or atten-
tion. Thus, A1 and his polygamous wives a3 and a4 divide a

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571 piece of small animal. a5 asks for part of it and a4 answers:
"Let your father give you his." These relationships bring about
854 a rather curious consequence: the young girls become independ-
595 ent more rapidly than the boys. They follow the young wives,
take part in their activities, while the boys, left to themselves,
timidly try to adapt themselves to the group but without great
success, and usually remain, at least in earliest childhood, be-
side their mothers.

857 [70] Considering now the relationships of children among
themselves, the most striking characteristic is the absence of
play. In certain groups (central and south), the children
manufacture, although rarely, small objects of rolled or braided
straw, but generally they know no other distraction than fights
or contests which they do together, and lead an existence
modeled on that of the adults. In fact, they carry on the normal
day of the women: in the morning, preparing the manioc, then
the cumaru nuts, bathing when it begins to get warm; when the
sun is very high, retiring to the shade, and before night, gather-
ing wood for the fire. Likewise, the girls learn to weave, they
walk around, laugh, sleep. The little boys do not begin to
play with little bows and imitate the male pursuits until much
later (from 8 to 10 years on). But all become rapidly conscious
of the fundamental and sometimes tragic problem of Nambikwara
life, that of nourishment, and of the active role that is expected
of them. They take part in the harvesting and collecting ex-
peditions with great excitement. In time of need, it is not rare
to see them seek their own food outside the camp, working to
unearth roots, or walking in the grass on tiptoe, a large stripped
branch in hand, to catch grasshoppers. The little girls know
what an important role the women have in the economic life of
the tribe, and are impatient to make themselves worthy of it.
[231 Thus, we find a young girl (b5) who tenderly carries a puppy
182] in the tump line that her mother uses for her little sister, and
we make the remark:

16. uainuttte ufkɔrage
She caresses the little puppy?

Her mother answers me:

uefkuãtnore uainuetuikadeʔena tãjtniene
The little girl caresses the puppy (because she wishes) to
raise it.

to which the little girl adds gravely:

838 Because of the fact of partial polygamy which reigns within
[595 the group, and which is manifested in the fact that the youngest
582 and prettiest women are periodically withdrawn by the chief or
605 the shaman from the regular cycle of marriage, the young men often find themselves in difficulty as regards marriage, at least during part of their adolescence, no potential wife being available. This problem is resolved by homosexual relationships, which the Nambikwara language (bl) has named poetically: tamindige kihãdige, that is false love. These relationships are frequent among young people and are carried on much more publicly than normal relations. The couples do not retire to the bush as the adults usually do. They install themselves near a fire of the camp under the amused eyes of the neighbors. The incident gives rise to some joking comments, usually not carried very far. These relations are considered infantile, and hardly any attention is paid them. The question remains unanswered for us as to whether these practices are carried on to complete satisfaction, or are limited to sentimental effusions, accompanied by erotic play such as those which characterizes, for the most part, relations between husband and wife. Whatever the case may be, the essential point here is that homosexual relations are exclusively relations between cross cousins. Whenever one seeks information from an Indian concerning a relationship of the type just described, the typical response obtained is:

25. tarutebãdige tamĩndige (bl)
(those are) two brothers-in-law making love.

838 We have not been able to ascertain if these relationships of
605 adolescence continue between adults. It seems hardly probable.
607 But relationships of a very special nature are maintained between "brothers-in-law. They exhibit great familiarity toward one another, have among themselves effusions such as we have never noted among brothers or relatives of another degree. Among the
[201] Nambikwara (always prodigious, of course, with affectionate gestures) it is not rare to see two or three men, married and fathers of families, walking in the evening tenderly embracing. The information obtained is, here too, always the same:

26. tarũte ialhaʔete. (bl)
The brothers-in-law are embracing.

607 Certain games, like the "the game of claws (griffes)"
524 (kajrobĩtunubi, c) are frequent among brothers-in-law.

1: Levi-Strauss--94 E-5 (1938-1939)1948 SP17 Nambicuara SP17
Tupinamba 509

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601 the same sense when he writes: "It is their custom to marry the
171 women who are their nieces, daughters of their brothers of their
582 sisters; they regard them as their true and legitimate wives. The fathers of these women cannot refuse them, and no one, except their uncle, can claim to marry them (1)." One can refer also to

1. Pedro de Magalhes de Gandavo, The Histories of Brazil, The Cortes Society, New York, 1922, II, ch. X, p. 89.

Nobrega, Vasconcellos, Soares de Souza (2).

2. Nobrega, Cartas do Brazil, 1549-1560, Rio de Janeiro, 1931, p. 148;--Vasconcellos, Chronica da Companhia de Jesu do Estado do Brasil, Lisboa, 1865, I. LXXXII, p. 133; Soares de Souza, Tratado, CLVII, CLII.

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595 As regards polygamy and the distinction, so clear among the
171 Nambikwara, between the first wife devoted to household tasks and the secondary wives, companions of the men and sharing their obligations, it will be remembered that Magalhães de Gandavo alludes to a category of women actually unmarried, but who take part in masculine activity (3).

3. Gandavo, loc. cit., II, Ch. 10, p. 89. One will find other information about the family organization of the ancient Tupi in: A. Métraux, La religion des Tupinamba (Paris, Leroux, 1928), passim; --Lafone Quevedo, "Guarani kinship terms as an index of social organization (American Anthropologist, Vol. 21, 1919), p. 421-440; --P. Kirchhoff, "Die Verwandtschaftorganisation der Urwaldstämme Südamerikas (Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, Vol. 63, 1931, Ch. 15, p. 182).

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607 All of these observations authorize us to trace a parallel between
171 the extension of the relationship of "brother-in-law" among the Nambikwara, and a custom, seemingly very close, of the ancient Tupi. First we quote from Yves d'Evreux: " A party of Frenchmen was dispersed throughout the villages to live there according to the

854 From this time on, the life of the Nambikwara infant goes on as we have described, and without there being much differentiation according to sex. These differences begin to appear only at the ap-
881 proach of puberty. At this time, the girls adopt a completely new behavior. They allow themselves great liberties, speaking brutally to their entourage and [109] amusing themselves with obscene acts. The fact is that the ceremony of puberty, which coincides with mar-
[553] riage, marks a decided change in her life and it is also upon that occasion that she receives her name. The Nambikwara women marry
582 very soon after their first menstruation. The polygamy of the chiefs
[595] creates a permanent deficit of women, and the newly available wife is impatiently awaited. According to our informants, it is the young
584 girl who indicates to her parents which of her potential husbands she wishes to marry. She says that she "wishes to marry quickly" (ikiⁿdurige, bl); the term of dialect al for "to marry" being oyensaikititu, literally: "to make a husband," it seems that, as has been affirmed, the initiative belongs to the girl:

48. inka (ni) durednjẽn durẽnẽ (bl)
"I wish to marry quickly" [says the girl]. "Mary," says the mother] (?)

Actually, it seems that the marriage is decided from infancy by an agreement between the parents. Farseeing parents must prepare far in advance the marriage of their son, for otherwise the latter risks not finding an available woman. Brothers-in-law have often indicated to us that their children were promised to one another.

881 At the time of puberty, the young girl is completely isolated for a period of from two to four months. She lives in a specially constructed shelter some distance from the village, and lives there alone, observing a series of alimentary and social taboos. During this period, her mother feeds her and takes care of her. The period of segration ended, songs and dances take place. Her shelter is torn down and "the mother takes back her child." Then the ceremony proper of marriage takes place. It is prepared by hunting and fishing expeditions and is carried out amidst chants and dances:

49. ʃirige ajũngnerage denano inĩra ʃikira ʃiknira tãta halonoo tatiʔkta ʃindage hntimbãta uʔrige imãgara imãgara (bl)
Go get fish, the women arrive, arrive, to broil [the fish] in the square go out, sing, whistle, play the flute, play the flute.

[End Plate VI]

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[607]

Brothers-in-law (cf. p. 76); in the foreground, B1.

[595]

The two wives of C20 (c19 and c21) engaged in a pleasant conversation.

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
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411 string (secondary release). Four types of arrows are used: (1) featherless fishing arrow with three to five prongs; (2) bird arrow with a blunt point; (3) big-game arrow with a lanceolate bamboo point; and (4) poisoned arrow, used chiefly for hunting monkeys, with several barbs which are attached to the point with cotton wrapping and which break easily in the wound, being, therefore, usually protected by a bamboo sheath. The last three have a bamboo shaft and "Arara" feathering. Sewed feathering is known by the central and northern groups but seldom [726] used. For warfare, big game arrows with serrated bamboo points are used.

278 *Nambicuara* arrow poison is a curare prepared by grating the root of a *Strychnos* shrub, and by infusing (*Eastern Nambicuara*) or boiling (*Central* and *Northern Nambicuara*) it until the water evaporates and leaves a thick brownish substance, which is smeared on a wax-coated arrow point. It can be preserved in tiny pots for several months. Among South American arrow poisons, it is remarkable because it is made of only one vegetable substance and is prepared openly—in some groups by the chief or shaman, in other groups by anyone—without magical practices or taboos. Its great toxic properties were studied by Vellard (1939 b).

Other poisons of unknown composition are used for amorous or political revenge. They are in the form of powders and are kept in tubes made of feather quills, bamboo, or other woods, each ornamented with paintings and cotton or bark wrappings.

411 Clubs are carved in the shape of a flattened or cylindrical pointed spade; the handle is often adorned with black and white plaiting of philodendron bark and bamboo strips. Their purpose is mostly ceremonial.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

601 Kinship terms identify parallel-cousins with siblings, and cross-cousins with potential or actual spouses. Cross-uncles and cross-aunts are called by the same terms as parents-in-law and grandparents; parallel-uncles and parallel-aunts are equated with parents. Similarly, parallel-nephews and parallel-nieces are classed with children, and cross-nephews and cross-[582] nieces with children-in-law. Marriage is between cross-cousins or between the maternal uncle and his niece. Monogamy is the rule, but [595] polygyny is the privilege of the chief and other important men. Polygyny is usually with several sisters (sororal) or with a woman and her daughters by a former union. The first wife runs the household, subsequent wives being assistants to the husband. The deficiency of available women which results from polygyny is compensated by homosexuality [838] between adolescent male cross-cousins (Lévi-Strauss, 1943 a).

622 The village is ruled by a chief, but each of the nomadic bands into which it splits during the dry season is led by a secondary chief. Chief-

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
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particular form of their own. Death is identified with these spirits. Men's souls are believed to be reincarnated as jaguars, whereas women's and children's souls are taken away by wind and thunder, never to return.

The highest being is the Thunder, with which any man, though usually a shaman, may have personal contact through revelations and visions. Women, however, except when very old, and children are deprived of these privileges. Women are also forbidden, under pain of death, to see the sacred flageolets (see Musical Instruments, p. 368) played at the ceremonies marking the beginning and the end of the dry season.

SHAMANISM AND MEDICINE

The shaman is sometimes distinct from—but more frequently identified with—the political chief. He is distinguished by having the privilege of polygyny, playing the leading role in ceremonial life, and possessing special supernatural powers. He treats patients by sucking out the disease or by fighting it with small ritual arrows called "thunder-arrows."

In addition to magical cures, the *Nambicuara* treat sickness with numerous medicinal plants, which are used externally or internally according to the disease. For eye infection, which is very frequent, they apply the infusion of a special bark with the help of a container made of leaves.

FOLKLORE, LORE, AND LEARNING

The only legend recorded by Lévi-Strauss (n.d. b) is a flood tale relating the destruction of human life and its re-creation through several incestuous marriages between the offspring of an old woman, who was the only being who escaped the disaster.

The only basic numbers used for counting are one and two, but the natives can reckon higher figures by combining these.

Colors are classified differently according to the dialects. The *Eastern, Central, Southern,* and *Western Nambicuara* agree in putting yellow and green in the same category, whereas the *Northern* group identify red and yellow, and class green, blue, and black together.

Some *Nambicuara* groups call stars by the same name which designates the spirits. The year is divided into two seasons and an undetermined number of lunar months. The day includes six main stages, each based on the position of the sun. Space is divided into two sections that are perpendicular to each other, one corresponding to the apparent movement of the sun and the other to the direction of the main waterways.

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3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
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622 and to meet groups too shy to venture forth on the outer fringe. The native band and my own group set out together on a journey supposed to be short; but, because of the animals I had taken, the chief had decided that the usual route through a dense forest could not be used. He led us through the open country, lost his way several times, and we did not reach our destination on the scheduled day. Supplies were exhausted and no game was in sight. The not unfamiliar prospect of a foodless day fell gloomily upon the natives. But, this time, it was the chief's responsibility. The whole project was his own, as well as the attempt to find an easier route. So, instead of trying to discover food, the hungry natives simply lay down in the shadow of the brush and waited for their leader to take them out of this most unpleasant situation. He did not wait or discuss; but, taking the incident as a matter of course, he simply left the camp accompanied by one of his wives. At the camp, the day was spent sleeping, gossiping and complaining. There was no lunch or dinner. But, late at dusk, the chief and his wife reappeared, both heavily laden with baskets filled to the [262] brim. They had hunted grasshoppers the entire day, and, although the expression "to eat grasshoppers" has approximately the same meaning in Nambikuara as the French *manger de la vache enragée*,[5] this food was enthusiastically received, shared and consumed, amidst restored good humor. The following morning, everybody armed himself or herself with a leafless twig and went grasshopper-hunting.

622 I have several times referred to the chief's wives. Polygamy, which is practically the chief's privilege, brings him a moral and sentimental reward for his heavy duties together with the practical means of fulfilling them. In the Nambikuara band, apart from rare exceptions, only the chief and the sorcerer (when these functions are divided between two individuals) may have several wives. The chief's polygamy, however, presents special features. It does not constitute a plural marriage but rather a monogamous marriage to which relations of a different nature are added. I have already mentioned the fact that cross-cousin marriage is the usual pattern among the Nambikuara. Another type of marriage also exists, between a man and a woman belonging to the generation following his own, either a wife's "daughter" (true or classificatory) or a sister's niece. Both forms are not uncommon in South America and, together or separately, they have been re-

[5] Closest English equivalent: "to have a rough time of it, to go through the mill."

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
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corded among many tribes. Now, what do we find in the chief's case? There is first a monogamous marriage of the cross-cousin type, that is, where the wife belongs to the same generation as her husband. This first wife plays the same part as the monogamous wife in ordinary marriages. She follows the sexual pattern of the division of labor, taking care of the children, doing the cooking, and collecting and gathering wild food. To this marriage are added one or several unions, which, technically, are true marriages, but of a different type. Usually, the secondary wives belong to a younger generation. The first wife calls them daughters or nieces. Besides, they do not follow the sexual pattern of the division of labor, but share indifferently in men's or women's activities. At the camp, they disdain domestic tasks and remain idle, either playing with the children to whose generation they belong or flirting with their husband, while the first wife keeps busy with the food and the fire. On the contrary, when the chief leaves on an exploration, a hunt, or some other manly task, they will accompany him and bring him their moral and physical help. These somewhat "tomboy" girls, elected by the chief from among the prettiest and healthiest of the group, are to him rather "girl-friends" than spouses. They live on the basis of an amorous friendship which contrasts strongly with the more conjugal atmosphere of the first marriage.

This system exerts a tremendous influence upon the whole life of the group. The periodical withdrawal by the chief of young women from the regular cycle of marriages creates a permanent unbalance within the group, between the number of boys and girls of marriageable age. Young men are the chief victims of that situation and must either remain bachelors for several years or marry widows or old women discarded by their husbands. Thus, the right to plural marriage represents a concession of considerable importance made by the group to its leader. What does it mean from the latter's point of view? There is little doubt that access to young and pretty girls brings him a much appreciated gratification, not so much from the physical side (as the Nambikuara share in the quiet dispositions of most South American tribes), as from the psychological and sentimental one. But, above all, plural marriage, together with its distinctive features, constitutes the technical means and the functional device placed at the chief's disposal by the group to enable him to carry out his exacting duties. Left by himself, he could hardly do more than the others. His secondary wives, freed by their special status from the customary

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
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622 liabilities of their sex, are his helpers, comforters and assistants. They
515 are, at the same time, leadership's prize and instrument. Can it be
182 said, from the native point of view, that the prize is worth the trouble? To answer that question, I shall now have to consider the problem from a broader angle, namely, what does this elementary social structure, the Nambikuara band, teach us about leadership, its basis and its function?

121 There is a first point which does not require great elaboration. Nambikuara data contribute, with many others, to destroy the belief originated by early anthropologists, and temporarily revived by psychoanalysis, that the primitive chief could find his prototype in a symbolical father, and that the simpler forms of the State could progressively have grown out of the family. We have found at the root of the crudest forms of chieftainship a decisive step, which introduced something entirely new in respect to biological relations—and this step consists of *consent*. Consent, we have seen, is at the same time the origin and the limit of leadership. Unilateral relations such as right of age, aristocratic power, or others, may appear in groups having an already complex structure. In simple forms of social organization, such as the one I have tried to describe, they are inconceivable. Here, on the contrary, the relationship between the chief and the group can be seen as a perpetual process of arbitration where the chief's talents and authority on the one hand and the group's ease, cohesion and willingness, on the other, constantly react on and influence each other. If I had the time, and if it were not so far removed from my topic, I would have liked to show what considerable support modern anthropological observations bring, in this respect, to the analysis of the eighteenth century social philosophers. I am well aware of the fact that Rousseau's "social contract," which is the step by which individuals resign their autonomy in favor of the General Will, is entirely different from the nearly contractual relations existing between the chief and his followers. It remains true, however, that Rousseau and his contemporaries displayed a keen sociological feeling when they understood that cultural attitudes and elements such as "contract" and "consent" are not the result of secondary processes, as claimed by their opponents; they are culture's raw materials, and it is impossible to conceive a political or social organization in which they would not already be present. If I understand correctly, the recent analysis, by modern American

ooo sionaries had not yet learned enough Iranxe to make working with informants possible.

621 As all of the following information, unless otherwise specified, relates to the Wakitiu band, a
622 short description of this band is in order. Today the band consists of 18 individuals, of which Julio
[731] is the chief. About 5 years ago, before a measles epidemic decimated it, the band was roughly twice the size it is today. Julio is a man of middle age, has three wives and two children, and probably holds his leadership by being the strongest and ablest man in the band. Except for one of Julio's wives and her daughter who are Elótaxu, the members of the band are Wakitiu and
•[595 related to one another. Julio took the Elótaxu
583] woman from the Elótaxu band by killing her husband. He claims he did this because the Elótaxu *chief* stole one of his wives some years ago. He claims he is going to steal another wife, for every *chief* is supposed to have four. Only three other men, Martin, Marciano, and Joaquin, are married, each having one wife. The remaining four are either widowers or as yet unmarried.

164 Of all the Indians which I have visited in Mato Grosso the members of this band of Nambicuara were the most miserable. Of the eight men, one had syphilis, another had some kind of infection in his side, another had an injured foot, another was covered with some kind of scaly skin disease from head to foot, and another was *deaf* and dumb. The women and children, however, appeared to be
515 healthy. Owing to the fact that they use no
[513] hammocks but sleep on the ground, they are always covered with dirt. On cold nights they remove the fire and sleep in the warm ashes.
[291] The Wakitiu wear clothes only when they are given by the missionaries, who ask that they be worn. Their distaste for bathing permits not only a covering of dust and ashes to accumulate on their skin and hair but also particles of decayed meat and fish, which, combined with stale sweat, makes proximity to them rather distasteful. They
[164] also appear to be heavily infected with internal parasites, for their stomaches are distended and they are continually passing wind. On several occasions when a number of them had crowded into the small room we used for working we had to cease work in order to air the room.

181 In their manners the Nambicuara also contrast
171 sharply with the other tribes I visited. The

6: Levi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1943
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

ing to the children of the father's sisters and of the mother's brothers, a man calls all his female cross cousins (to one of whom he is or will be married) "wife," and all his male cross cousins "brother-in-law;" conversely, a woman calls all her male cross cousins (among whom her actual or potential husband is numbered) "husband" and all her female cross cousins "sister-in-law." No terminological difference is made between actual and potential spouses. The members of the next younger generation are similarly divided into "sons" and "daughters" (Ego's own children and parallel nephews and nieces) and "sons-in-law" and "daughters-in-law" (Ego's cross nephews and nieces), since these are or may be the spouses of his children.

The system is somewhat complicated by secondary distinctions made between elder and younger siblings and by the fact that another kind of marriage ——between a maternal uncle and his niece—is also practised. This new pattern usually appears in the polygynous unions which, in the prevailingly monogamous Nambikuara society, are the privilege of the chief. This point needs some elaboration. Nambikuara polygyny results from the fact that, subsequent to a first marriage having all the characteristics of the common (i.e., the cross cousin) form, a man may contract one or more unions of somewhat different nature. Actually, the position of his new wives is not the same as that of his original one, and, although constituting real marriages, the later unions are nevertheless psychologically and economically different from the first. The atmosphere in which they evolve is less conjugal and more like a kind of amorous friendship. The younger wives cooperate more extensively in the numerous tasks imposed on their husband because of his special social obligations. Furthermore, the activities of these women do not conform as closely as those of the first wife to the general pattern of the sexual division of labor. Finally, they are younger and are classified, in relation to the earlier wife, as "daughters" or "nieces." Such "oblique" unions (that is, between members of different generations) may also take place in monogamous marriages, but less frequently. Although their occurrence among the Nambikuara is an important point in our demonstration, the consequent modifications of the kinship system are not essential for the purposes of this article and we may therefore omit further mention of them. Our present observations will be limited to the special implications of the brother-in-law relationship which is expressed through the reciprocal terms *aɨkkeru* (Eastern dialect), *tarɨiɨ* (Central and Western dialect) or *iɨpa* (Northern dialect).

It must be emphasized immediately that this useful translation of the native term is not in any way accurate. While the *aɨkkeru* is a man's male cross cousin and also his potential brother-in-law, since the persons calling each other *aɨkkeru* (or *tarɨiɨ* or *iɨpa*) call each other's sisters "wife," it is only in particular instances that one or more of the individuals involved is, in fact, the wife's brother or the sister's husband or both. The meaning of the term *aɨkkeru*

6: Levi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1943
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Regarding polygyny and the sharp differentiation made among the Nambikuara between the first wife who devotes herself to feminine activities and the younger wives who are their husband's companions and share his tasks, it may be recalled that Magalhaes de Gandavo[17] refers to a special category of women, single indeed, who shared in masculine activities.[18]

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The preceding similarities may perhaps allow us to establish a valid comparison between our observations concerning the extension of the "brother-in-law" relationship among the Nambikuara and what seems to have been a very similar institution among the ancient Tupi. We first quote Yves d'Evreux:

> They scattered part of the French through the villages so that they might live according to the custom of the land, which consists in having *cheveuseap*, that is to say, hosts or god-sibs (*compères*), giving them merchandise instead of money. Such hospitality or god-sib relationship is very close among them, for they regard you as their child as long as you stay with them. They hunt and fish for you and, what is more, they used to give their daughters to their god-sibs (*compères*).[19]

The same author refers later to the "French who were established in the villages in a god-sib relationship (*compérage*)."[20] Evidence of the aboriginal institution may also be found in Jean de Léry:

> It is worth remarking that the words *simo-assap* and *coüem-assap* differ, because the first signifies a perfect alliance between them and between them and us, so much so that the belongings of the one are common to the other. And also that they cannot have the daughter or sister of the first named.[21]

From this one may infer, conversely, that marriage is authorized with the sister and the daughter of the *coüem-assap*. Therefore, the *coüem-assap* is granted a double privilege: first, marriage with his partner's sister, which makes him a "brother-in-law"; and, secondly, marriage with his partner's daughter, which is equivalent to his assimilation to the rank of "maternal uncle";—then, because he is considered a theoretical brother of his partner's wife, he also becomes a theoretical brother-in-law. Actually, therefore, both privileges have the same result.

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One more similarity between the Tupi and Nambikuara brother-in-law relationship remains to be pointed out. All the texts quoted agree that there existed among the Tupi a kind of authority held by young men over their

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[17] *Loc. cit.*, II, ch. 10, p. 89.

[18] Other indications on the familial organization of the ancient Tupi may be found in: Métraux, *La Religion des Tupinambas* (Paris, Leroux, 1928), passim; Lahore Quevedo, *Guarani Kinship Terms as an Index of Social Organization* (American Anthropologist, Vol. 21, 1919), pp. 425-440; Kirchhoff, *Die Verwandtschaftsorganisation der Urwaldstämme Südamerikas* (Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, Vol. 63, 1931, ch. 15), p. 182.

[19] *Voyage dans le Nord du Brésil*, ed. F. Denis (Leipzig et Paris, 1864, II), p. 14.

[20] *Ibid.*, XXVIII, p. 160.

[21] *Loc. cit.*, II, ch. 20, p. 133. Cf. also Cardim, *Tratados da Terra e Gente do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 1925), pp. 109-110.